

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03219 190901Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 /063 W
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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0550

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3219

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR KS US
SUBJ: PING-PONG: MOFA EXPRESSES CONCERN

1. MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR PAK SANG-YONG CALLED POLCOUNS CLARK LATE AFTERNOON APRIL 19, AFTER SEPTEL REPORTING PRESS REACTION THIS SUBJECT ALREADY DESPATCHED, TO EXPRESS MOFA CONCERN OVER REPORT THAT US TEAM WILL VISIT P'YONGYANG IN 1979. POLCOUNS INFORMED PAK AT OUTSET THAT HE HAD ABSOLUTELY NO INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT. PAK STATED THAT, GIVEN PRESENT ATMOSPHERE IN WAKE OF BLUE HOUSE BUGGING FUROR, MOFA WAS CONCERNED THAT PING-PONG TRIP, IF TRUE, BE HANDLED IN MOST CIRCUMSPECT MANNER. IN PARTICULAR, HE SAID THAT QUESTIONS WERE TO BE EXPECTED AT DEPARTMENT'S APRIL 19 NOON BRIEFING AND HE HOPED THAT CAREFUL ATTENTION COULD BE GIVEN TO ANY REPLIES PROVIDED. HIS MAIN CONCERN WAS THAT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN NOT INDICATE US GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR SUCH A TRIP IF THE REPORT PROVED ACCURATE. POLCOUNS AGREED TO PASS MOFA CONCERNS TO WASHINGTON IN ORDER THAT THEY BE CONSIDERED DURING PREPARATION FOR NOON BRIEFING.

2. IN MORE PRIVATE VEIN, PAK SAID HE WAS UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND REASON FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION AT THIS TIME, ONE YEAR IN ADVANCE OF PROPOSED TOURNAMENT. POLCOUNS
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POINTED OUT THAT EVEN PRESS REPORT DID NOT INDICATE A RELEASE. PAK WENT ON TO ADD THAT THERE WAS CONCERN IN SOME CIRCLES THAT JAPANESE PRESS WAS BEING USED AS SOUNDING BOARD FOR TRIAL BALLOON ON US/KOREAN POLICY. IN THIS RESPECT, HE NOTED THAT FIRST REPORT OF TRIPARTITE TALKS HAD APPEARED IN MAINICHI. AND NOW PING-PONG VISIT FIRST SURFACED IN YOMIURI. POLCOUNS

POINTED OUT THAT US GOVERNMENT POSITION WAS ONE OF
FULL CONSULTATION WITH ROKG AND THAT IT WAS NOT OUR
POLICY OR PRACTICE TO USE FOREIGN PRESS FOR SUCH
PURPOSES. HE URGED PAK TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO
DISPEL AND REFUTE SUCH ALLEGATIONS.
SNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 19 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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